Lebanese American University
Louis Cardahi Foundation

Ministry of Tourism

THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE
Cultural route of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel du Conseil de l'Europe

TRIPOLI

Tripoli, founded by the Phoenicians around 800 BC is today the second largest city and main port in Lebanon. It includes the port area (al-Mina) and the city itself dominated by the imposing citadel of the twelfth-century. Offshore the city there are the **Palm Islands**, where the green turtles take shelter, since 1992 UNESCO Protected Nature Reserve.


Location of Tripoli


Tripoli Poster

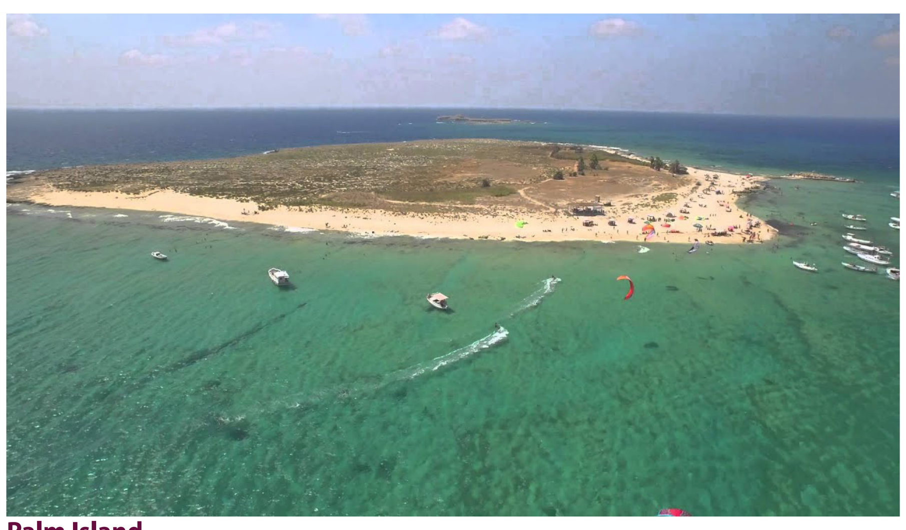


Tripoli Webpage

DESTINATIONS IN TRIPOLI


Aerial View of Al-Mina and the City of Tripoli


The citadel


Palm Island

SURROUNDINGS: Bcharri, Wadi Qadisha, Menjez, Arqa and Al-Qoubaiyat

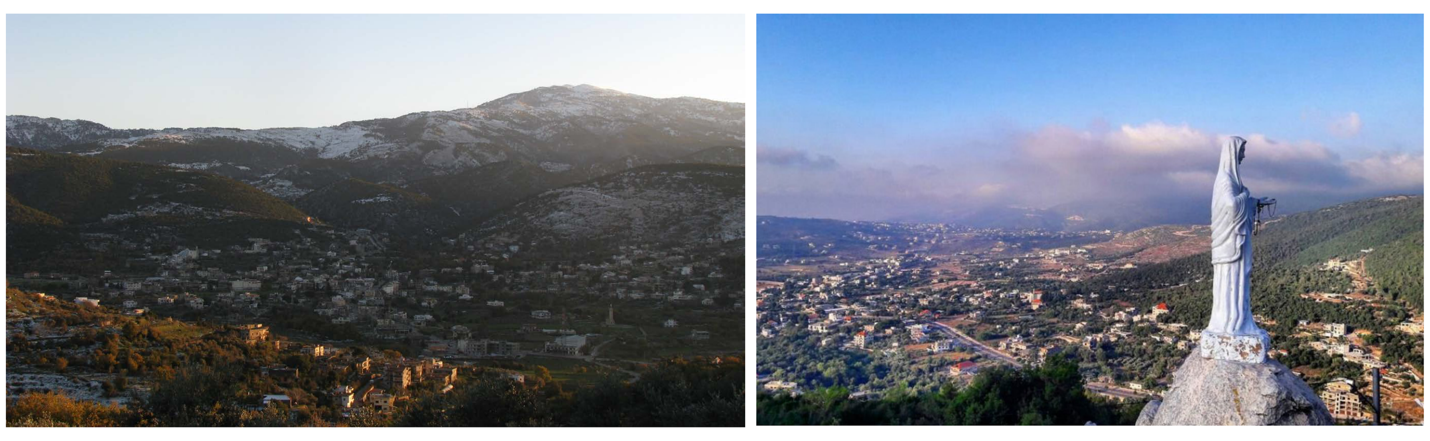

Becharri is a town to the east of Tripoli, and it is in the area where the infamous cedar Forest of Lebanon are located. These forests known from the Bible to the Ottoman period as a major source for woods to construct large audience halls in antiquities, and which were essential to forge good relations between Ancient Egypt and the city of Byblos.


Wadi Qadisha is a valley known for being a sacred destination where one can visit several monasteries carved into the sides of its rocky hills.

Wadi Qadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars heritage sites are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List (1998).


Menjez has an exceptional archaeological heritage site in Lebanon and includes a Roman basalt temple called Maqam Er Rabb or Beit Jaalouk, the only basalt in Lebanon.


Arqa (Phoenician: Irqata; 'Arqat in the Bible) is a village near Miniara in Akkar Governorate, Lebanon, 22 km northeast of Tripoli, near the coast. The former bishopric became a double Catholic titular see (Latin and Maronite). The Roman Emperor Alexander Severus was born there. It is significant for the Tell Arqa, an archaeological site that goes back to Neolithic times, and during the Crusades there was a strategically significant castle.


The origin of the name "**Al-Qoubaiyat**" is Aramaic. The word "Qbayya" means the big pool of water, and "Qbayyat" is the plural of it. That region was called "Qbayyat" for being rich in water sources.

SIDON

Sidon, founded in the fourth millennium BC, in its long history has seen Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Crusaders and Mamluks following one another. From the Ottoman era remain the *Great Mosque* and the Caravanserai, built in the seventeenth century to house the merchant caravans in transit. Interesting are also the picturesque suq, home to numerous craft shops.


Location of Sidon


Sidon Poster


Sidon Sea Castle

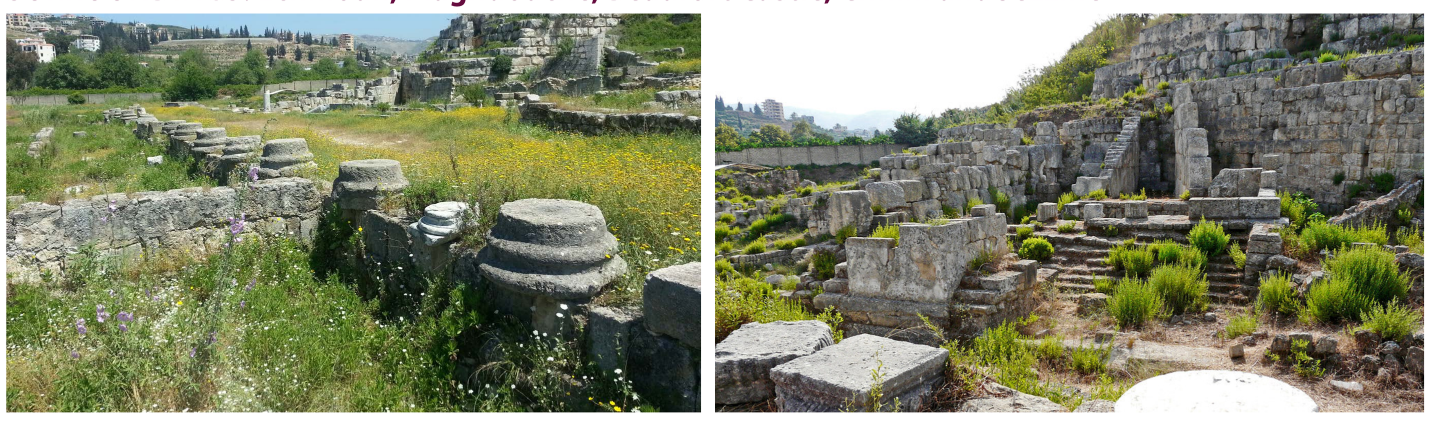
DESTINATIONS IN SIDON


El-Omari the Great Mosque


Sidon Old Souk


Khan El-Franj

SURROUNDINGS: Echmoun, Maghdouche, Beaufort Castle, Chhim and Jezzine


Echmoun, a Phoenician temple dedicated to the god of healing (hence the name), is located at the entrance of Sidon. It is considered one of the best-preserved Phoenician temples in Lebanon.


Maghdouche is known for Our Lady of the Guard Church containing a grotto, where it is believed the Virgin Mary stayed while Jesus visited the surrounding cities of the south.


Beaufort Castle is located 40 km from Sidon on an escarpment of almost 1000 meters above the valley. The castle was built as a defensive and strategic post for the Crusaders. Consecutively used by the Ayyubids, the Mamluks and Emir Fakhreddine, it was later restored during the French mandate following an earthquake.
Review of the Beaufort Castle

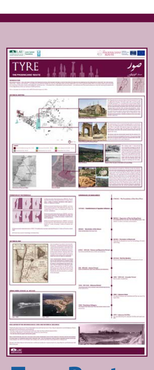

Chhim has several landmarks around it such as the Temple of Eshmun, an ancient place of worship dedicated to Eshmun, the Phoenician god of healing. It is located near the Awali river. The site was occupied from the 7th century BCE to the 8th century CE, suggesting an integrated relationship with the nearby city of Sidon.

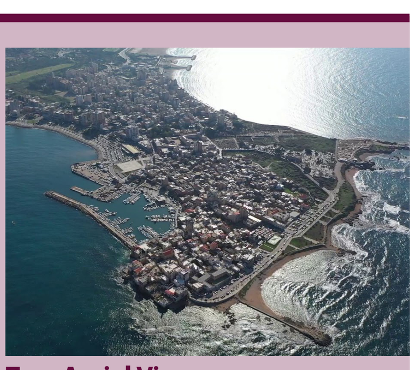

Meticulously sculpted by Youssef Ghossoub, the Statue of the Virgin Mary stands at the west entrance of **Jezzine** overlooking the villages of Bkassine, Wadi Jezzine, the Bkassine Pine Forest and the waterfall. It's religious significance and cultural icon has become a key point in the region with vast natural landscapes surrounding it. In her hand, the Virgin Mary holds the key to the town of Jezzine. The view from there is fantastic and it is a great spot to take panoramic pictures.

TYRE

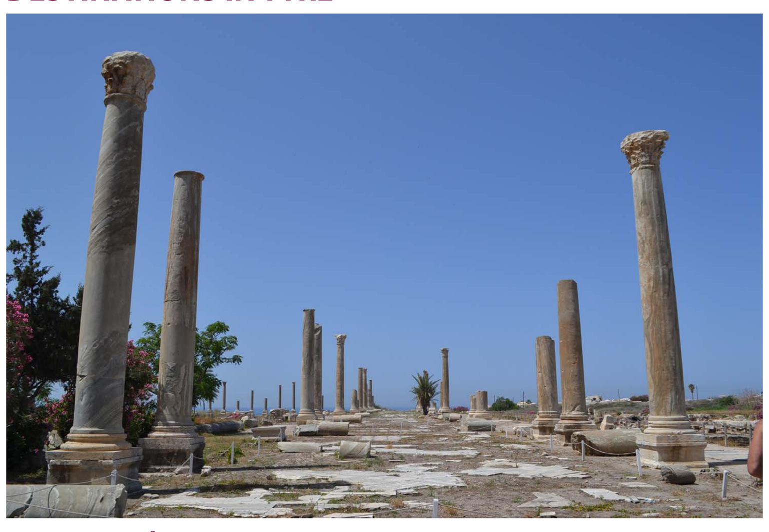
The city of **Tyre**, built around 2700 BC, was originally made up of two settlements – one on the mainland and the other on an island – that in the fourth century were joined by a causeway. In the insular area it is possible to admire the remains of the Roman city, with mosaic paved roads and delimited by porticos. Not far away you can admire the ruins of the cathedral built by the crusaders and the vast necropolis, with numerous sarcophagi of the early Christian era. A paved road passes under the imposing arch of triumph leading to the hippodrome, capable of holding 20,000 spectators. For its inestimable value, since 1979, Tyre is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

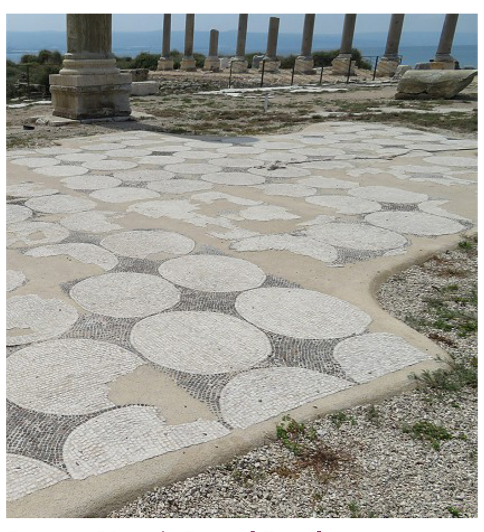

Location of Tyre


Tyre Poster


Tyre Aerial View

DESTINATIONS IN TYRE


Roman Road


Roman Mosaic Paved Roads


Crusader Cathedral


Seats of the Circus, Hippodrome

SURROUNDINGS: Sarafand, The Citadel of Tebnine, Umm Al-Amad, and Qana


Sarafand (Sarepta), is a major Phoenician site located between Sidon and Tyre. It is now a fishing town and a touristic attraction because of its restaurants. The site was well studied and excavated from 1969-1974 by the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Some of the finds are housed in the National Museum of Beirut.


The Citadel of Tebnine (Toron) is a Crusader Castle built in 1105. The fortress witnessed many battles throughout its history.


Located on the eastern shoulder of the Naqoura Sea in South Lebanon, **Umm Al-Amad** encompasses layers of tangible Greek civilization artifacts. Although it was discovered by a French explorer in 1772, it was not excavated until 1861. The city of more than 60,000 square meters still bears witness to an important historical period and tells of architectural art and precision in engraving and sculpture with tools dating back to the Iron Age, so named after the discovery of iron nearly 3,000 years ago. Umm Al-Amad's two temples were built roughly between 287 and 222 BC.


Qana (Cana), located at 13 km from Tyre. It is believed that this is the village where Jesus performed his first miracle, turning water into wine.